

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method for accessing a plurality of bi-directional services that are transmitted over a cable television network, comprising:
 - presenting a program guide with at least one bi-directional service including availability information for each of the at least one bi-directional service to at least one subscriber;
 - receiving a request for a bi-directional service displayed in the program guide;
 - determining a current bandwidth consumption and availability of the requested bi-directional service;
 - dependent upon the current bandwidth consumption and availability, rendering the bi-directional service;
 - updating a bi-directional services database to reflect that the rendered bi-directional service is one of available or unavailable; and
 - populating ~~the~~ an updated program guide with the at least one bi-directional service and updated with availability information, wherein the at least one bi-directional service is maintained in and periodically updated in the program guide by a the bi-directional services database, ~~wherein the bi-directional services database is updated by at least one remote subscriber;~~
 - receiving a request for a bi-directional service displayed in the program guide;
 - if the requested bi-directional service is available, rendering the bi-directional service; and
 - updating the bi-directional services database to reflect that the rendered bi-directional service is one of available or unavailable.
2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of receiving a request for further information regarding the requested bi-directional service.
3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of querying the bi-directional services database to ensure the requested bi-directional service is available.
4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving a request from a subscriber for a bi-directional service comprises at least one of a bi-directional communication session between the subscriber and at least one other subscriber associated with the requested bi-directional service, a bi-directional communication session to purchase a viewable option of the requested bi-directional service;

or a bi-directional communication session to purchase a recordable option of the requested bi-directional service.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
receiving a second request for an available bi-directional service displayed in the program guide;
determining the current bandwidth consumption;
dependent upon the determined bandwidth consumption, transmitting the bi-directional service;
and
updating the availability information in the bi-directional services database.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 5, further comprising the steps of:
~~wherein~~ if a displayed bi-directional service is not available due to the unavailability of the bi-directional service, receiving a request for future consumption of the requested bi-directional service; and
if a displayed bi-directional service is not available due to the current bandwidth consumption,
receiving a request for one of future consumption of the requested bi-directional service at a first price or
a request for immediate consumption of the requested bi-directional service at a second price.
~~providing notification when the bi-directional service is available.~~

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 6, further comprising the step of providing
notification when the bi-directional service is available, wherein the notification of the previously
unavailable bi-directional service comprises displaying a notice on a currently displayed program.

8 - 11. (Canceled)

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of continuously
updating the bi-directional services in the program guide to display availability information for each of
the plurality of bi-directional services.

13. (Currently Amended) A system for accessing a plurality of bi-directional services over a cable
television network comprising:

means for receiving availability information from at least one remote subscriber related to a plurality of bi-directional services;

means for populating a bi-directional services database with the availability information related to the plurality of bi-directional services;

means for presenting a program guide to a plurality of subscribers, wherein the program guide displays the plurality of bi-directional services along with the availability information;

means for receiving a request from at least one of the plurality of subscribers for at least one available bi-directional service displayed in the program guide;

means for determining a current bandwidth consumption;

dependent upon the current bandwidth consumption, means for enabling a bi-directional communication session between at least one of the plurality of subscribers and a remote subscriber based on the requested bi-directional service;

means for rendering the available bi-directional service;

means for generating an updated bi-directional services database to reflect that the requested at least one bi-directional service has been rendered and is one of available or unavailable; and

means for retransmitting the program guide including the updated bi-directional services to the plurality of subscribers.

14. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 13, wherein the updated bi-directional services database is updated by information received from the at least one remote subscriber.

15-31. (Canceled)